

14 Vital Skills for Supervisors

Documenting Performance



2



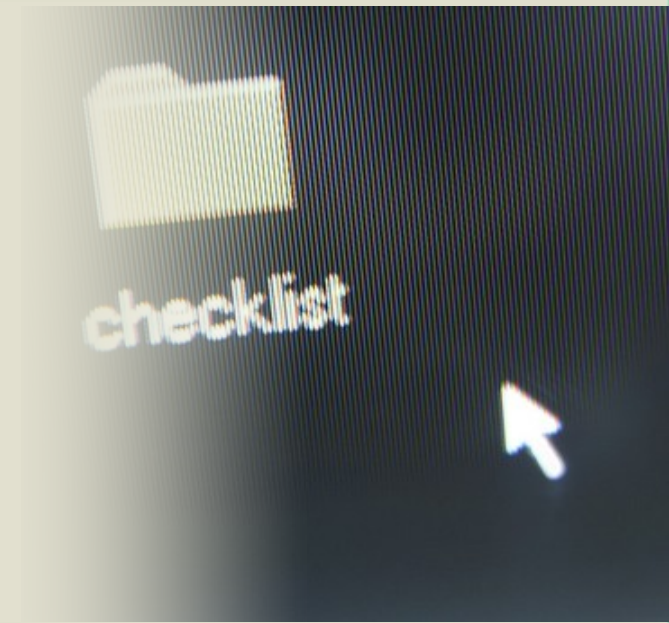
Documenting Performance

Treat documentation as a communication tool to preserve facts and remove ambiguities.

Do You Have All the Documentation You Need?

Skill
2

- The best answer: “Sure. I’ve built a file that documents everything completely. We’re on solid ground.”
- The wrong answer: “No, but I’ll put some 🔊 documentation together so we’re safe.”



Document Personnel Matters as They Occur

Skill
2

- Must reflect a complete, accurate account of what individuals discussed and what events transpired on a specific date
- Failing to maintain ongoing documentation can not only embarrass you, but also limit your organization's ability to terminate poor employees
- This may lead you to falsely conclude that your employer does not support you



Benefits of Documentation

Skill
2

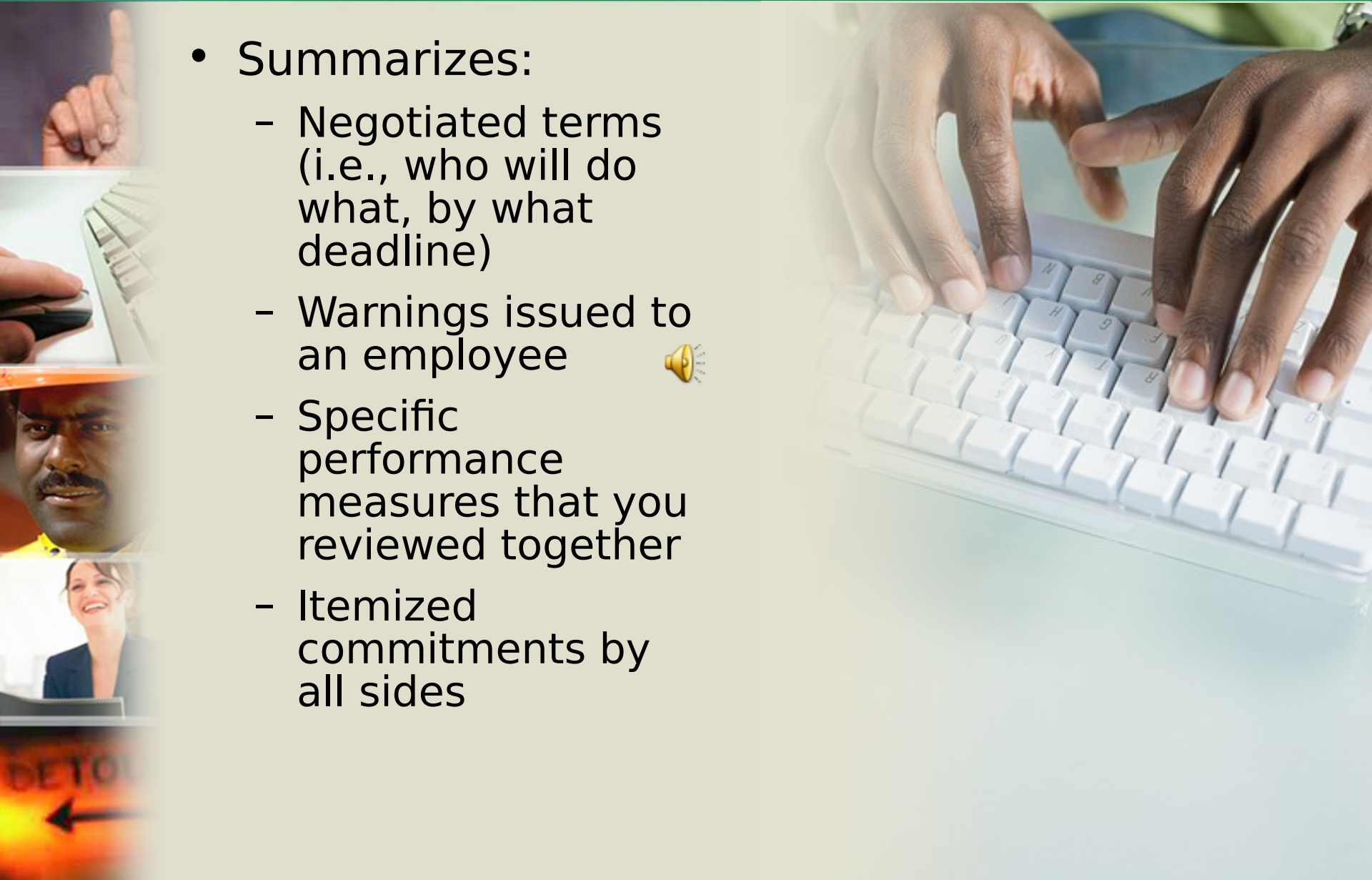
- Benefits outweigh the effort
- You build a paper trail for future reference
- Prevents misunderstanding among all parties 📢
- Affords legal protection to you and your employer in the event of litigation



Features of Good Documentation


Skill
2

- Summarizes:
 - Negotiated terms (i.e., who will do what, by what deadline)
 - Warnings issued to an employee 🔊
 - Specific performance measures that you reviewed together
 - Itemized commitments by all sides



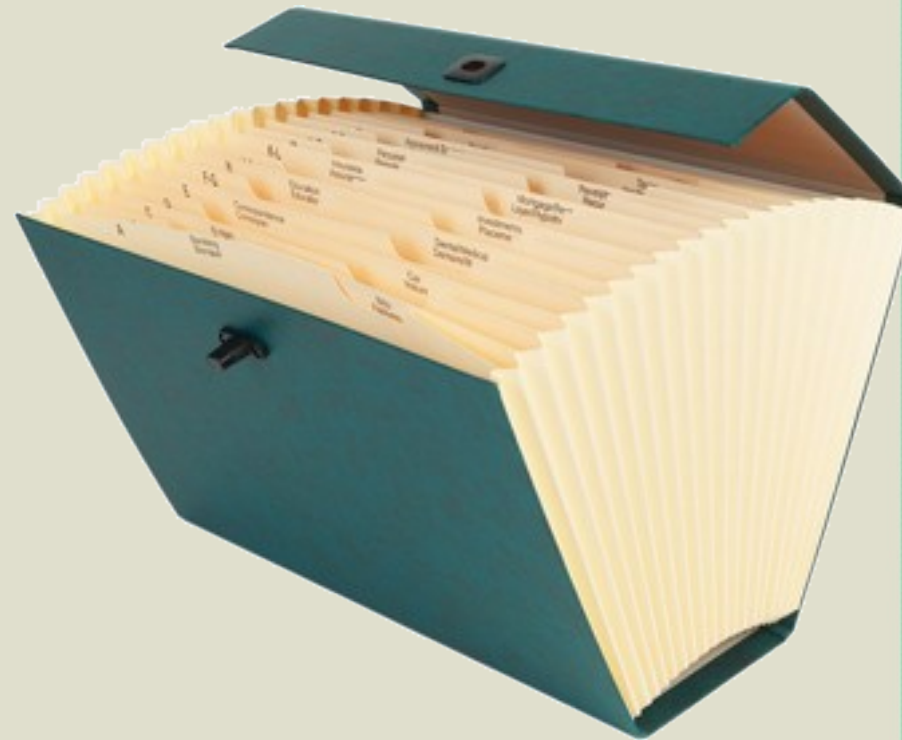
Stick to the Facts

Skill 2

- Not a personal journal or emotions, thoughts, etc.
- Keep professional notes
- Write in a detached tone
- Focus on quality of work, behavior and conduct, attendance and availability 
- Do not attack an employee's character or become an armchair diagnostician
- No “psychological” statements




- 



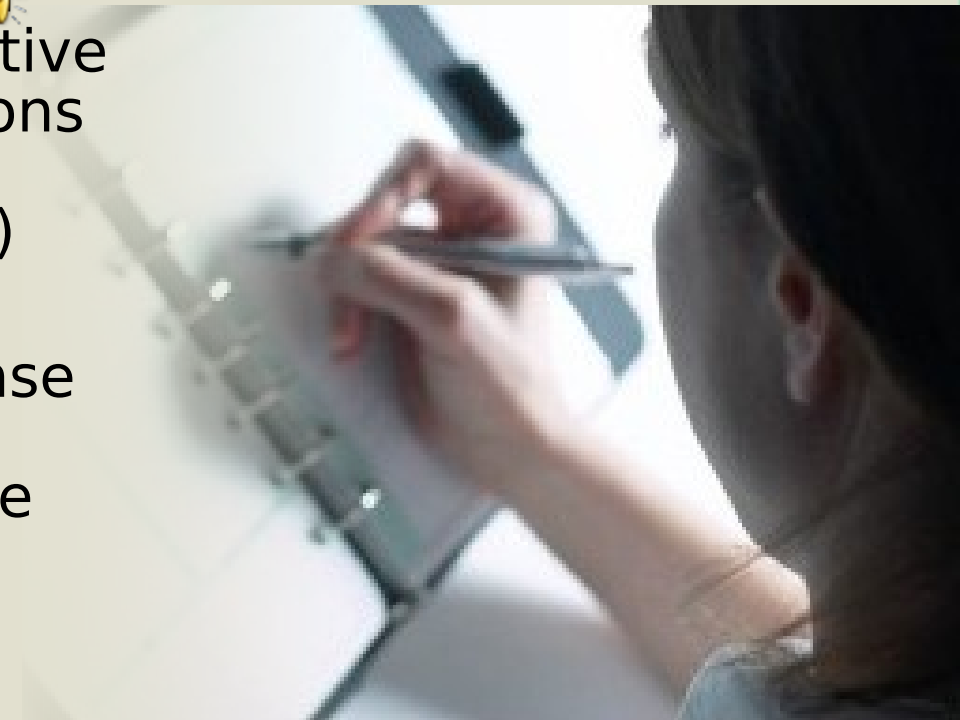
Documenting Disciplinary Meetings with Employees

Skill
2



Summarize 3 elements of the conversations:

1. The acceptable standard of performance – or minimal expectation
2. The extent to which the employee did or did not meet this objective (specify any violations and/or resulting disciplinary actions)
3. The employee's perspective, response or position in addressing the issue



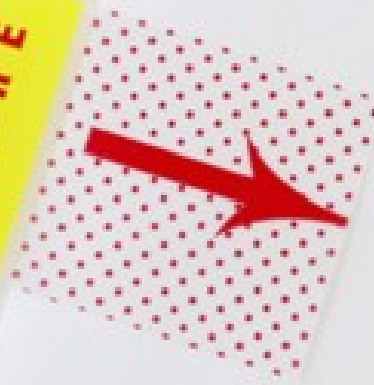
Employee Acknowledgment

Skill
2

- Ask an employee to review and sign an acknowledgment of your documentation
- This signals that you want to keep transparent and accurate records 🔊
- Document any instances when employees reject your offer to read or sign your notes



**SIGN
HERE**



name (print)

signature

Warning

Skill 2

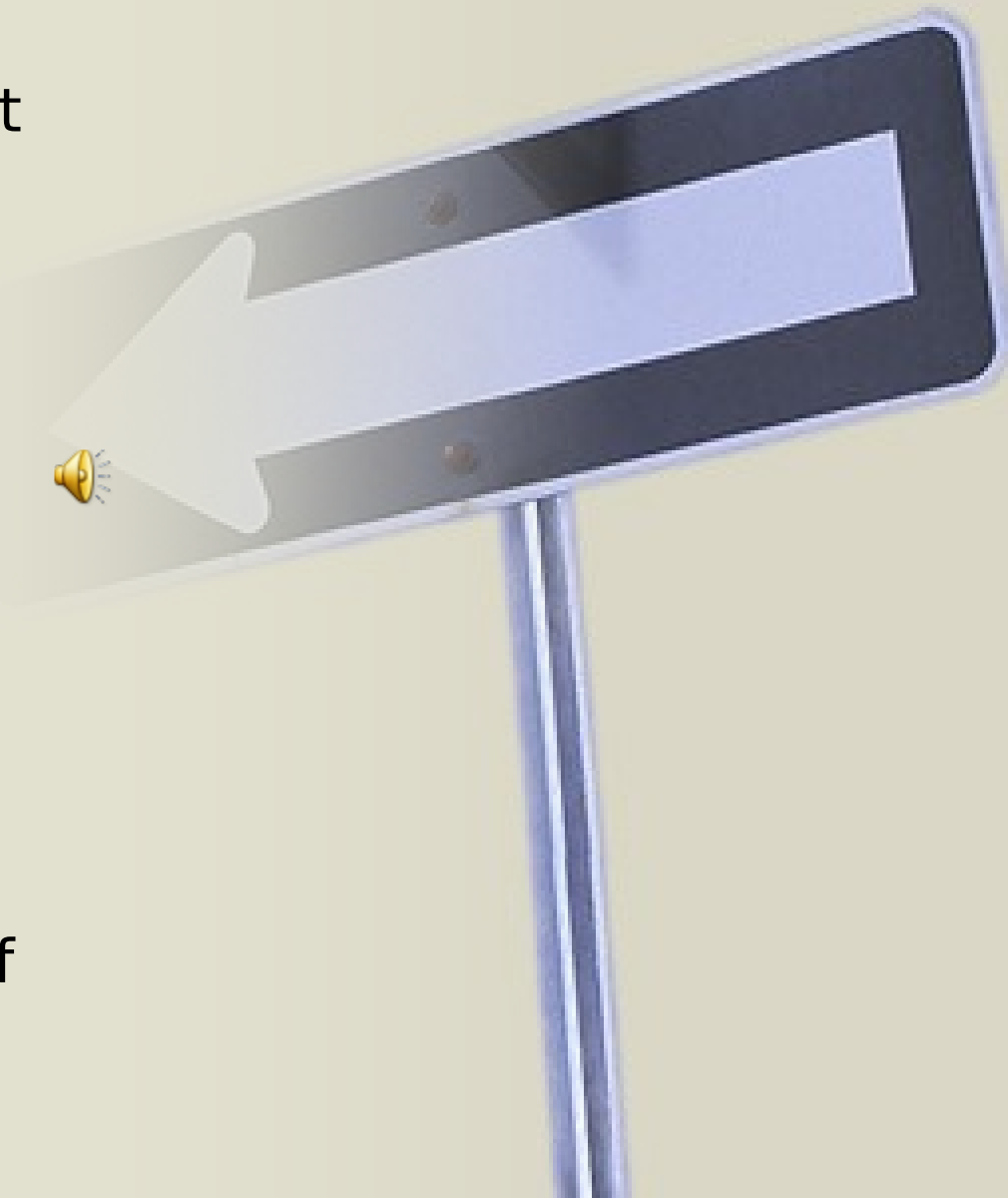
- Be an “equal opportunity” note-taker
- Don’t just document the failings of poor employees – build a file on every worker, noting performance issues—good and bad—for everyone on your team 🧐
- Documenting positive performance makes you appear as a supervisor who is fair and without an ax to grind
- Be careful not look as though you are “out to get someone”



Tip

Skill 2

- Block 10 minutes a day to document discussions with employees
- Preferably do this in the last 10 minutes before you leave the office so that the day's events are fresh in your mind
- Then create a ritual of locking your file cabinet as your final act of the workday



It's True

Skill 2

- Employees—and their attorneys—routinely dispute what you may deem an irrefutable fact
- It's important to beef up a file with evidence to support your documentation 📢
- Consider
 - Eye-witness reports
 - Photos
 - E-mail, correspondence
 - Other exhibits

